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The USN logo, featuring a stylized infinity symbol or 'X' shape to the left of the letters 'USN' in a bold, sans-serif font.A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'R. King'.

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A large, high-quality photograph of a very muscular man, Robert King, posing shirtless. He is holding a barbell with both hands, and his abdominal muscles are extremely defined. He is wearing blue athletic shorts. The background is a solid blue with diagonal white lines.

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SNOW, SURF AND SKI-DOOS

Lewis Hamilton's action-packed adventure in Japan.



The four-time F1 World Champion visited Hokkaido Island to hone his snowboarding skills with some of the world's best riders. Hamilton, an accomplished snowboarder himself, used the opportunity to push the limits of his ability under the watchful eye of acclaimed snowboarders Kevin Backstrom, Tor Lundstrom and Halldor Helgason.

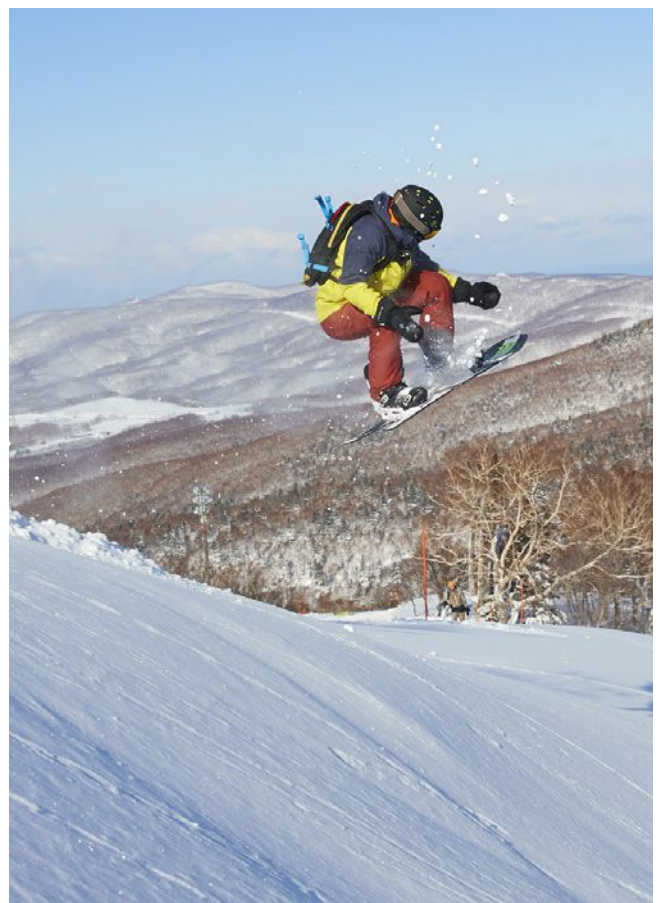
The crew headed to Hokkaido Island and spent time hiking in the mountains, riding in fresh powder, burning around on snow bikes and Ski-doo's and when the snow turned to rain during the trip - Hamilton instigated a trip to the west coast of the island to spend the morning surfing in the Sea of Japan.



"IT WAS GOOD BEING ABLE TO GO ON A TRIP LIKE THIS AT THE START OF 2018. IT WAS REALLY GOOD HANGING OUT WITH SOME INCREDIBLE ATHLETES AND PUSHING MY SKILLS ON A BOARD WAS SO ENJOYABLE – THE PERFECT PREPARATION FOR THE F1 SEASON AHEAD."

—Hamilton









IMAGES COURTESY OF MONSTER ENERGY.

"IT WAS A GREAT TRIP TO BE PART OF AND LEWIS'S RIDING WAS IMPRESSIVE. MONSTER ENERGY ALWAYS COMES UP WITH COOL PROJECTS AND BEING ABLE TO RIDE WITH ATHLETES FROM COMPLETELY DIFFERENT DISCIPLINES WAS SO MUCH FUN — I HOPE WE GET TO RIDE TOGETHER AGAIN." —*Lundstrom*







IN VINO VERITAS

The insider's guide to Italian wine, from the author of How to Drink Like a Billionaire

Text by MARK OLDMAN

If you're going to drink like a billionaire, you have to drink Italian wine. No glass so ably matches the lusty flavours of Italian cuisine, be it the blissful combination of a piercing friulano with creamy burrata or a Barbaresco with a steaming plate of buttered pasta and shaved Alba truffles.

We all know the likes of prosecco, pinot grigio and Chianti, any of which can be deeply gratifying when well made, but this is just the tip of the tiramisu that is Italian wine. With more than 300 grapes and a dizzying number of wine regions, it is the wine world's crazy quilt of complexity. The good news is that this prevents even most experts from becoming experts on Italian wine, which takes the pressure off—and makes it that much harder for snobs to show you up. If you learn just a few good types, you'll be ahead of the game.

Another advantage of Italian wine is that compared to its counterparts in France and California, the most coveted versions aren't always the world's most expensive. Just as some vintage Alfa Romeo Spiders sell for only four figures, the Italians believe in delivering beauty at all price points. And the value of learning to pronounce a few special Italian wines should not be underestimated. Order an everyday-sounding merlot or malbec and your date will yawn, but purse your lips around the glamorous Etna Bianco or amarone—and you've already closed the deal.

Friulano (Free-oo-LAH-noh)

Let the pikers play with their pinot grigio while you favour friulano, a white that's the pride of north-eastern Italy but still relatively unknown outside of wine circles. Uncommonly refreshing, friulano is crisp and medium-bodied, with an often pleasantly bitter aftertaste of minerals or almonds. While some versions edge over R720, it often goes for about half that.

Try: *Livio Felluga Friulano Friuli Venezia-Colli Orientali* (R430).

Fiano (Fee-AH-noh)

A good introduction to Italy's best white wines is fiano, which hails mostly from southern Italy's Campania region. Its lemony acidity and medium weight makes it versatile with most dishes, especially pasta creations with nuts or basil, both of which are also signature scents in the wine. Sniff mindfully and you may even detect a floral bouquet, so if you forget to bring flowers, there's a good chance this wine will do it for you. **Try:** *Pietracupa Fiano di Avellino* (R430).

Amarone (Am-ah-ROE-neh)

A powerful, swaggering capo, this is a heady red made from dehydrated grapes grown in the Valpolicella district of Italy's Veneto region. Its bold, high-octane taste, which sometimes has hints of chocolate or minerals, often requires 10 or more years to mellow. Prestigious and powerful, it deserves to be drunk in a jewel-encrusted chalice. **Try:** *Giuseppe Quintarelli Amarone della Valpolicella Classico* (R5 400).

Aglianico (Ah-lee-AH-neh-ko)

Considered the top wine type of relatively humble southern Italy, aglianico delivers a savoury black-fruited whoosh of sour cherry, leather, black olive or smoke. It is generally more affordable than its counterparts up north and is a willing match for porterhouse, rib eye and other meaty fare.

Try: *Feudi di San Gregorio "Serpico" Irpinia* (R1 200).

Etna Bianco (ATE-nah bee-AHN-ko)

If anyone tries to give you grief about drinking white wine, tell them yours was wrought by a fearsome volcano, which is exactly how the best wines from Sicily—and specifically around the east coast district of Mt. Etna—came to be. The grapes raised on Mt. Etna's high-altitude, volcanic soils, including ancient indigenous varieties such as carricante, create wines that are refreshing but have a distinct minerality and intensity.

Try: *Benanti Etna Bianco Superiore* (R580).

Barolo and Barbaresco (Bah-ROH-low, Bar-bah-RAY-sko)

Italy's rich, regal expressions of the nebbiolo grape, Piedmont-based Barolo and Barbaresco can be astonishingly unique in nose and taste. Their signature scents are tar and roses, but leather and menthol often rise to the fore. Their ample acidity and tannins also make rich food a necessity, so unleash the osso buco.

Try: *Gaja Barbaresco* (R2 900).





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LANA ELYSE

Talent, beauty and brains, this model turned photographer has much to offer and it's all in one dynamic hot package.

Photography by LANA ELYSE BRAND

Text by SAMANTHA JACK



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My name is Lana and I live in Stockton, California, USA. I have been modelling for quite a long time; before there was such a thing as Instagram. My initial interest in modelling came from just looking at catalogues. I always thought it would be fun to model and see myself in print. A year after high school, I discovered a modelling website to help people wanting to be in the industry to build their portfolios. I joined but didn't really think I would actually make the move to meeting with photographers and doing photoshoots. Before I knew it, I was on a roll!

Instead of shooting photos just for Myspace purposes (yes, I've been shooting since the Myspace days), I decided I wanted to get into magazines somehow. I would shoot submissions with various photographers, and I started accumulating some print credits. After some publishing, I wanted more! Over time it became tough arranging shoots with photographers, and there were always those who failed to return edited photos which became a waste of time. I had this idea one morning to get into photography so I can create my own material. It was then, my love for photography was born. Shooting my own content has been challenging yet rewarding and photography has been an amazing asset. I'm also branching out and shooting other models, and it is a great feeling helping another model reach their own goals.

It's been quite a journey so far, and there have been times I've felt like giving up and moving on, especially after being diagnosed with stage 1 breast cancer in October 2017. When I was diagnosed everything came to a stop and after learning about my treatment options, I thought I'd have to give up modelling. Being my stubborn self, I realised I can still reach my goals, I can still shoot! I will just be the model with a couple extra scars. In December I underwent a double mastectomy with immediate reconstruction, so currently I am in the middle of the first phase of reconstruction. I'm very happy and thankful to report that as of December, I have been cancer free! I will continue to model, and I plan on bouncing back better than ever. I've held a positive attitude through this process and during my downtime I've been very productive (like with this feature for Maxim).

It's an honour to be featured in Maxim and to be a part of the Maxim family! I'm excited to see what the rest of this year will bring and I hope I've inspired you and hope you all follow me along the way. Even though I've been doing this a long time, I feel like I'm truly just now getting started.





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EPIC GAMES

Defy doomsday by taking up arms and joining the resistance, own the octagon on your journey to MMA superstardom or stunt and jump yourself all the way to ultimate glory!

By ANDRE COETZER



FAR CRY 5

The Far Cry series throughout the years has taken players to exotic islands, Himalayan mountains, the African bushveld and even back to prehistoric times. So where to next for the popular series? Well the good old United States of America of course. Far Cry 5 takes place in the serene looking, yet deeply twisted areas of Montana. As the new junior deputy of Hope County, Montana, players will find that their arrival accelerates a years-long silent coup by a fanatical doomsday cult, the Project at Eden's Gate, igniting a violent take over of the county. Under siege and cut off from the rest of the world, the player will join forces with residents of Hope County and from the Resistance. Far Cry 5 not only features a brand new location and villain, but also features new vehicles in the form of aeroplanes, opening up the impressive open world even more. Attack enemy bases from the sky and unleash your

justice from above. To take down the cult, players will need to utilise any and all weapons at their disposal, including ranged weapons such as guns and grenades and melee weapons like a sledgehammer or baseball bat. Additionally, players can recruit Guns for Hire from a large cast of characters, or even Fangs for Hire, specialised animals like bears and cougars to complement players' playstyles whether they're going in stealthily or forcefully. How players approach each situation and the chaos they create is up to them. Far Cry 5 is an interesting new direction for the series, but with all the elements that made the series such a hit firmly in place. It's a clever, funny and terrifying first-person shooter and is already a candidate for game of the year for 2018.

Available on PC, PS4 and Xbox One at btgames.co.za (R925)



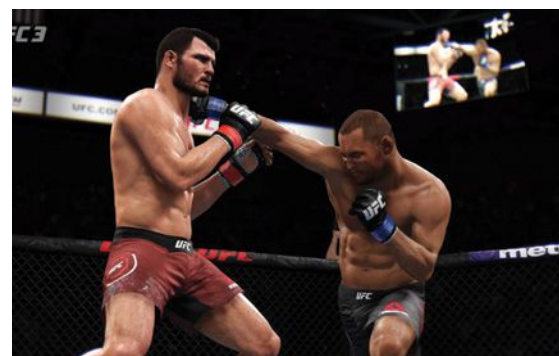
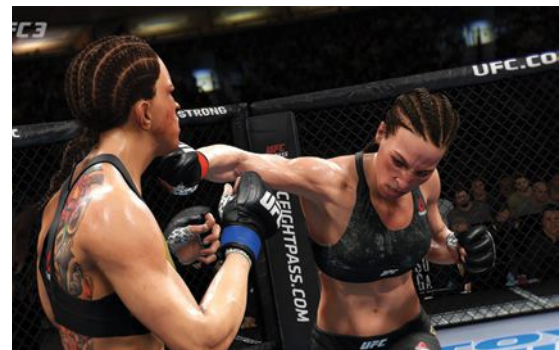


EA SPORTS UFC 3

EA Sports returns to the Octagon for another attempt at recreating the most intense sport on the planet. With UFC 3, every punch, kick, block and counter has been recaptured and rebuilt using cutting-edge Real Player Motion Tech. With over 5000 new animations captured and rebuilt from the ground up, you can now move, strike and create seamless combinations with the fluidity and freedom of the world's best UFC fighters. Slip and strike while in full motion to execute dangerous counter-attacks, adding new strategy and competition to every fight. The biggest new addition to UFC 3 however is that of the G.O.A.T. Career mode. For the first time ever, the choices you make outside the octagon impact your greatness inside it. Between each bout, make promotional choices that will help you gain fans, build hype for your next fight and potentially earn you more lucrative contracts from the

UFC. However you will not start as a UFC fighter, that honour needs to be earned. Instead you start your MMA career in the World Fighting Alliance, and it's up to you to put in the kind of performances that will catch the eye of UFC boss Dana White. Once drafted into the UFC, it is up to you on how to hype your fights, annoy your rivals and march on towards the title of the G.O.A.T. EA Sports has always been known to create good-looking sport titles, but UFC 3 might just be the best looking fighting game ever made. The player likenesses are scarily accurate and the movements are as lifelike as you can get. UFC 3 is a massive step forward for the franchise, making it arguably the best fighting game available today. Even if you're not a fan of the world of mixed martial arts, you will find something to love in UFC 3.

Available on PC, PS4 and Xbox One at btgames.co.za (R915)





MX VS ATV ALL OUT

Since its initial release back in 2005, the MX VS ATV series has been synonymous with fun, fast-paced off-road racing experiences. In its 13-year existence, the series has grown into a powerhouse with each iteration improving on the last. Now in 2018, MX VS ATV ALL OUT is without a doubt the best in the series. Choosing between bikes, ATVs and UTVs, you will get to refine your rider style at your private compound and race across a massive open world to compete in various game modes. New to the series is the Freestyle mode which allows you to perform insane stunts across various terrains, the bigger and flashier the stunts the closer you will get to victory. It's an incredibly fun mode that is easy to play but hard to master. Multiplayer has also seen a big upgrade with 2 player split-screen local co-op play and an impressive 16 player online mode. Challenge your friends and fellow all-terrain fans from across the world for ultimate glory. As with previous MX VS ATV games, you get to select from numerous gear and vehicle companies from around the world, adding to the impressive realism of the series. Upgrading your vehicles is always a vital part to winning in style or being left behind and MX VS ATV All Out gives you even more freedom to tune your ride to your exact specs. Created from the ground up for current consoles, MX VS ATV All Out looks fantastic and plays better than ever before. If you're a fan of the series or new to the exciting world of all-terrain racing then MX VS ATV All Out is without a doubt for you.

Available on PC, PS4 and Xbox One at btgames.co.za (R735)



WANDERLUST

AN ACCLAIMED TRAVEL WRITER ON WHY SOLO JOURNEYS MIGHT JUST BE THE ULTIMATE APHRODISIAC.

by LAWRENCE OSBORNE

O

OVER THE CENTURIES, travel has become one of the world's largest industries. But until the '60s, this strange form of human behaviour was always shrouded in an atmosphere of high culture and moral improvement; its real motives were hushed up. English novelist E.M. Forster suggested, in his early novels about travellers in Italy, that frustrated, repressed upper-class English people really went to Italy not to examine churches and relics, but to find love and sex. "One doesn't come to Italy for niceness," one of his characters admits, "One comes for life." A polite euphemism for getting laid.

Freud was of the opinion that sex and railway travel always went together. But the same could be said for any form of whimsical wandering. The Grand Tour, in the 18th century, was supposed to be a way for young aristocrats to improve their minds through visits to Roman ruins. In reality, it was a nonstop debauch. They went to Venice for both the Tintoretos and the courtesans, but they certainly preferred the courtesans.

Two hundred years on, I suspect that we travel for very similar reasons, though we almost never admit it. The wandering traveller is more open to random experiences than his more structured home life could ever permit. As the hotel room, and bar, and the streets of a foreign city replace his own home and his tediously overfamiliar haunts, his mind starts to open up to the unexpected.

"Walking is a virtue," Bruce Chatwin once said, while, "Tourism is a deadly sin." And indeed, the solitary explorer in foreign parts is nearly always in an unconscious position to stumble upon the erotically unknown, provided that he gets out of the car, or the train, or, God forbid, the tour bus, and makes his way on foot.

Each continent is different. In North America, the traveller gravitates to the hotel bar, where he finds a variety of fellow transients looking for connections. In tropical Asia, where I live, the street itself is the conduit, with the restaurants of Bangkok, say, so crowded together as to make flirtations almost inevitable. In Europe, it is parks and museums, though who could resist a hopeful spin at the bar of the Savoy in

Rome, or the more secretive watering hole in Istanbul's Ciragan Palace Kempinski?

The easiest achievement is the ad hoc hookup with a fellow traveller, since, like you, she is likely to be unmoored and open to novelty. Our guards are down all the way. I once hit it off with a German woman in a laundromat in Tokyo, while we were doing our backpacker detergent duty. We seemed to be the only Westerners in the neighbourhood where we were staying, and this enormous fact had a kind of erotic allure to it. But why? I wondered to myself at the time if I would have found her attractive had I met her where I live. "Probably not," I admitted, but the sentiment was priggish and irrelevant. Place and time are everything in human life. She wrote to me for years before finally admitting coyly that she had been happily married while travelling in Tokyo. Fair enough. All bets are off when you're several thousand kilometres from home, trying on a new self is part of the fun of escaping, wandering away from a cultural context that circumscribes everything you feel and do. On the road, you are not expected to behave in any particular way, other than not murdering or abusing people.

On the other hand, of course, there is the equivalent allure of mutual incomprehension with a local. Once, I hired a motorbike in Battambang in Cambodia for a few days in hopes of "seeing the town". One night, I noticed that someone was following me on a bike of her own. She eventually caught up to me, and asked me if I would take her to dinner. We ended up kissing and then sleeping on a boat in a river, but no sex. It went on for two weeks, and the same rule held, yet I never got tired of it. It was a motorbike fling with a cultural context that was completely beyond me, and in the end, I found that the nonsex was more erotic and mysterious than the sex would have been. There is something curiously liberating about sharing intimacy with someone whose language you cannot speak. Sharing only a few words can sometimes get you to the point much quicker. The spaces between them fill up very quickly.

Most travel is uneventful, or worse. Trains are late, baggage breaks the back, money seeps uncontrollably, and mere places frequently disappoint. At the back of your mind, however, there is often a thought of which you are partially ashamed. And at the end of the day, there is always an hour or two when, alone, you can slip like a slick thief to the bar of a nice hotel, order yourself a gin and tonic, and disappear into the rarefied atmosphere of eternal hope and lechery that a simple hotel bar can confer. You'll probably stagger upstairs alone at midnight, with the flat screen for company. But every once in a while, if you're lucky, the gods will smile and remind you that you are not entirely dead, or even domesticated. ■

THERE IS
SOMETHING
CURIOUSLY
LIBERATING
ABOUT SHARING
INTIMACY WITH
SOMEONE WHOSE
LANGUAGE YOU
CANNOT SPEAK.



Steve McQueen in
California, 1963.

wish you were here

WHO IS APPLEBY?

THE UNDERGROUND R&B SENSATION IS POISED TO BREAKOUT, WITHOUT EVEN LETTING THE WORLD SEE HIS FACE.

by DAN HYMAN

APPLEBY'S VISAGE IS ROUND, even cherubic. His eyes widen, and he'll flash a fluorescent smile every time he gets excited about a topic of discussion. Which is often. But you'll have to take my word for it, at least for now. The 23-year-old singer-rapper, who has drawn comparisons to the Weeknd, both for his velvety voice and the mystery he cultivates, refuses to be photographed. In fact, he has so far managed to keep his true identity a complete secret.

In pictures, Appleby's face is obscured, tucked underneath an overcoat. But right now, at a studio we're at, he's completely present, every garrulous, goofy inch of him. "Yo! How's it going, my man?" Appleby bellows, all wide-toothed smile and chirpy, come-here-bro charm, wrapping me in a hug.

He bounds about the studio, back and forth between the recording booth and the control board, where a dreadlocked engineer puffs a marijuana pipe. As to why he won't reveal himself to his growing fan base? "For me, it's just plain fun," he says, "It's my way of allowing people to interpret the art first, and formulate their own opinions about me before seeing me."

Now going by his mother's maiden name (his real first name is Justin), Appleby has been recording music for only 11 months. A few months ago, days after he uploaded the track "Spit on Me" to his Soundcloud account, his murky, genre-bending brand of after-hours R&B received raves on the Source, Pigeons and Planes, and other influential music sites. Soon, Appleby was signed by a talent manager, and he found himself in front of hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons for an impromptu desk-side performance.

"I'm smelling roses on the go," Appleby says of the whirlwind ascent that now has major labels itching for his signature, "To have generated this much interest without a hit song is just awesome." Despite such rapid-fire success, Appleby remains hidden in plain sight. Save for his mother, he says none of his friends or family are aware he's even making music. When not at the studio, Appleby manages a store in a suburban mall. "It's a completely separate world," he says, comparing his dull home life to the surreal professional one that recently whisked him to London and Paris for meetings with producers, fellow artists, and labels.

"I don't talk about music at home," he says, "Nobody around me is really interested. There's something cool about having a secret." Leading a double life is nothing new for Appleby. As a child tennis prodigy, the son of separated parents spent much of the year at a posh tennis academy. During the holidays, he'd retreat to Cleveland, USA, to spend

time with his alcoholic father, that is, when his old man wasn't disappearing. "There were days when I would find him in the alley, and I would have to bring him back home," Appleby says of his dad, who he hasn't spoken to since age 17, "Or I would go to a drug house, and you'd get through all the crackheads, and find your father in the corner."

After quitting tennis at 17, he returned home and slid into a 6-year depression. "Then music came along," he says, "And it gave me a reason to wake up every day."

Appleby started recording, and quickly immersed himself in the studio's culture. "It's like going to school every day just to see your friends," he says of the spot that's hosted fellow hip-hop elites Chance the Rapper, Vic Mensa, and Tink. While finishing his album, "Mask & Lies," set to drop by the end of the year, Appleby is also preparing for his live debut. He sharpens his skills by performing incognito at local karaoke bars, singing classic Michael Jackson songs.

Appleby remains unsure how his life could change if he reveals his true identity. He can only tilt his head back and smile at the thought of being completely exposed, "I think people will probably just be like, 'Ah, so there he is.'" ■





SAVANNAH RUPPEL

This incredibly feisty bombshell will leave you reeling in excitement and begging for more.

*Photography by RYAN DWYER
Produced by MAINSTREETPRODUCTIONS
Text by SAMANTHA JACK*

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With long flowing beach blonde hair, alluring green eyes and elegant composure, it's hard not to want to meet this beautiful bombshell. As a model and pharmaceutical sales representative, Savannah's electric energy, fearless attitude and positive outlook on life keeps her constantly striving to reach new self-goals.

"I'm always chasing adventure and pushing myself out of my comfort zone. That's why I live my life modelling and travelling as much as I can. I'm trying to see as much of the world as I can and create opportunities for myself.

What I find attractive in a man

It's all about a man's personality and his demeanour. I like someone who's adventurous and free-spirited, but respectable. A gentleman.

What turns me off
Simple minds.

My hobbies

Volleyball, painting and spontaneous international travels.

For more of Savannah's adventures you can follow her on Instagram @savnhxoxo



LIVING IN DENIM

Fashion meets sporty comfort as we take a look at the hottest casual looks.

Photography by Kirsten Ho Photography

Styling by Lexie Robb

Grooming by Vanessa De Freitas

SHIRT: H&M R429;
PANTS: H&M R429;
BELT: Aldo Man R499;
SHOES: STEVE MADDEN
R1 499; **WATCH:** RADO
R61 900





PANTS: H&M R429; **T-**
SHIRT: TOPMAN R149;
JACKET: SCOTCH & SODA
R4 799; **SHOES:** H&M
R529; **WATCH:** RADO
R25 800



SHIRT: TOPMAN R698;
SHORTS: TOPMAN R599;
SHOES: ALDO R1 299;
WATCH: RADO R63 900



SHIRT: H&M R429; PANTS:
COTTON ON R399;
SHOES: ALDO R1 499;
WATCH: ORIS R24 000



JACKET: BRENTWOOD
R; T-SHIRT: TOPMAN
R149; JEANS: COTTON
ON R599; SHOES: STEVE
MADDEN R1 499; WATCH:
BELL & ROSS R47 000

ONE AND ONLY

The Bentley that changed the game

Text by JOHN PAGE

Bentley is aware that only a small number of its Bentaygas will ever end up facing the off-road conditions it was so rigorously designed for but simply knowing that the car is capable of roaring up a sand dune or clawing across an icy road puts Bentayga a cut above. The same applies to its 300km/h top speed when clogged highways or narrow capillaries into the countryside are far likelier scenarios.

Yet Bentayga is all about excess. Doing the unthinkable and making it look easy. And giving people several reasons to buy one, when in fact just one of them will do.

Bentley's timing for a R4.5 million SUV seems about right, considering the breadth of capabilities it covers and the global boom towards the upmarket SUV. The Bentley that does everything has arrived right on time.

Bentley has graciously given Maxim SA the Bentayga powered by the W12 engine (a V8 diesel is set to arrive soon in SA) and I can confirm that just like all its other promises, Bentayga delivers sharply on its 0-100km/h time of 4.0 seconds.

Even when walled in by Bentley's seemingly bullet-proof doors and glass, you get a touch caught off guard the first time you switch to

Sport mode and hoof the accelerator. Plenty moments are spent doubting how any of this should be possible in a 2.4-tonne behemoth...

Being part of the Volkswagen Group does have its perks. For instance, the electronic anti roll bars powered off the 48-Volt system imbue the Bentayga with fast, secure handling that casts a new mould for what constitutes a dynamic SUV. Even on unfamiliar UKB-roads, the all-wheel drive system, 22-inch rubber and (on our car) air suspension do an impressive job of soothing our gung-ho actions.

Having toured the factory that morning I have a new appreciation for the leather and veneers. I've watched bits of dyed leather rejected for the smallest imperfections and veneers sanded by hand to a precise millimetre thickness and then mirror matched for a symmetrical yet natural look.

The Bentayga's muscular size and airy cabin rewards these finishes, accentuated by quilted leather, double cross stitching, knurled aluminium and organ stops for the ventilation. Tempting to flick and touch every surface and then say 'Ah, so that's what genuinely bespoke feels like'.

On-board Wi-Fi and tablets that can unclip from the headrest mounts enhance convenience and the sharing of files between devices happens instantly through compatible apps. Bentley's strong uptake of the Naim audio system comprising 20 speakers and 300-watt subwoofer feeding off individual amplifier channels (for about R100,000) is top of mind, as is the event seat for those sun downers in far-flung edges of the world.







M A X I M

S O U T H A F R I C A

D O R É
D A U B I N

The vivacious, driven bombshell who loves to perform and strive for excellence.

Photography by ARTHUR ST. JOHN *Hair & Make-up by* JULIE PATEL

Text by SAMANTHA JACK

What is your ethnicity?

French and Irish.

What is your Zodiac sign?

Capricorn.

Where are you from?

California, USA, born and raised outside of San Francisco.

What is your career goal?

I am currently pursuing a degree in pre-law.

Describe yourself

I am vivacious, strong but very feminine.

Where is your favourite vacation destination?

Tuscany, Italy.

What are your turn-ons in a man?

I like a man who is hardworking, trustworthy and has old fashioned values. I find it very attractive when a man is protective. I have always had a soft spot for a man that is humble.

What about turn-offs?

Being unreliable in everyday things, it's such a turn-off to me. A man that lies and doesn't take good care of himself. Lack of commitment and mistreatment of animals are all big turn-offs.

What are some of your hobbies?

Poetry, real estate, and belly dancing. I feel most alive when I'm dancing in the studio or on stage.

You're on the cover of Maxim South Africa, what does this mean to you?

Being a Maxim cover girl is a dream come true. I would always see

beautiful women on the covers of magazines and wonder how it would feel to be that woman. It is very exciting that this has happened in my life. I think gracing a cover as big as Maxim South Africa is one of the best things to ever happen while modelling. I'm very happy to be on the cover.

What was it like doing the photo shoot for this cover?

It was such a glamorous day. Set in a beautiful mansion in Beverley Hills. Being doted on by so many people. Julie Patel did my gorgeous make-up and was right there to put more lip gloss on me and make my hair super sexy. I felt so complete with my organic spray tan by Aurora. Most of all when Arthur St. John got behind his camera, things started to rock with music and wind machines. With his great eye for detail, we made outstanding photos. I felt so confident and like a diva doing what I'm meant to do... model.

What advice would you give aspiring models just starting out?

The best advice I can give to a model just starting out is, don't starve yourself trying to have a certain copy-cat look. Eat healthy, do yoga and running. Healthy food, healthy body. Be good to yourself because self-love is key. Real confidence can take you far in the modelling world. Don't be afraid to ask questions on how to pose. Be very selective with who you choose as your photographer to work with. Try to work with the best from the beginning, it will save a lot of time.

If you had the power to change one thing in the world, what would it be?

It would be to bring back respect for the family unit. Our generation needs to value the importance of God's purpose for home life. Having dinner around the table every night and teaching basic manners would be a great start. Simple rules to live by would bring back function and class. It feels like the world is one big 'free for all' now.

COVER GIRL

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COVER GIRL

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PRIDE, PASSION AND PODIUMS

Locally built Toyota Hiluxes return from Dakar as heroes.



Leaders after stage 1 with another string of stage wins towards the end of two relentless weeks of racing, Toyota Gazoo Racing continued to assert its legendary consistency and reliability by taking second and third at this year's Dakar - the world's toughest off-road rally raid. Characterised by inhospitable climates, over a thousand kilometres of timed racing, obscure navigation waypoints and severely punished mistakes, Dakar sees months of testing and development enter a high-pressure cauldron with an alarming rate of attrition for all competitors. Only the very best make it to the finish.

For Toyota the annual race represents a synergy to prove Hilux's credibility as the world's toughest bakkie with a motorsport stamp for South Africa's proving grounds: the highest sand dunes in the world, washed-away ravines, narrow canyons and fesh fesh - a light powdery dust that shrouds the road ahead often causing catastrophic high-speed accidents.

March 2018 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the indomitable Hilux, a bakkie that outsells its competition in South Africa nearly every month. And while Toyota has its roots in Japan, the Dakar Hilux carries a very colourful South African presence. For it is here, a workshop in Kyalami to be precise, where each racing Hilux is developed and prepared.

The Dakar Hilux bears strongly to the original 4x4 production version on the outside but every conceivable gain in performance has been unboxed within the rules. There's a Lexus-derived V8 under the bonnet, suspension travel soaks up boulders and cushions the landings and unnecessary weight cleaved from its body to meet the minimum weight target while still offering driver protection.

With an experienced driver and navigator line-up consisting of past winners and armed with the fastest evolution of Hilux ever

built, the competition was right to be worried. In the build-up to Dakar, the Toyota Hilux had dominated earlier rally events - success that would not have gone unnoticed by Peugeot and MINI.

But speed alone never wins Dakar and even the best preparation can still end up in disappointment. Toyota applied the early pressure by winning the first stage. By the end of day 4 the Hiluxes were running impeccably near the front in what was establishing itself as the hardest Dakar since being hosted in South America.

At the halfway point a series of small misfortunes delayed the front-running Hiluxes but at the same time two of the Peugeots dropped well behind due to an accident and difficulty in the dunes. The locally-built bakkies were forcing bigger-budget rival teams into mistakes with flawless performances that threatened to deny Peugeot a final victory. Peugeot's tactics turned defensive, using the other cars as support for its lead driver while Toyota closed in with every car that started the race still within a shot of victory.

The rest of the race, beneath the contrast of tactics, was a fascinating game of cat and mouse with Toyota drivers taking turns to attack the leading Peugeot in the vestiges of those tense kilometres. In the end though Carlos Sainz driving the 3008 Peugeot drew on years of experience, content to shadow his rivals and control the bleeding of time as Peugeot bowed out of competition on a high.

The South African Hiluxes endeared themselves to a new group of fans - something of an underdog tag that elevated a little corner of South Africa's motorsport inner circle to the world's biggest off-road fraternity. Next year they will return to Dakar as favourites, recognised as the team everyone will want to drive for. The world's fastest Hiluxes will roar into life again, zig-zagging in SA's National Off-road championships, emboldened by last year's result and in search of that first Dakar victory.





**"IN THE BUILD-UP TO
DAKAR, THE TOYOTA HILUX
HAD DOMINATED EARLIER
RALLY EVENTS"**





TOYOTA HILUX DOMINATES BEGINNING AND FINAL STAGES OF THE DAKAR RALLY



LAURA ALONSO

Talented, vivacious photographer turned model, kimberley Anne is a feisty fun loving and hard working beaut with a flair for all things adventurous.

Photography by RYAN DWYER Produced by MAINSTREET PRODUCTIONS

Hair and Make-up by BRIDGET MARTINEZ Text by SAMANTHA JACK

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The Spanish bombshell with a love for photography, travel, food and culture. Talent, beauty and brains are just part of the whole package that is Laura Alonso.

Originally from Spain, Laura currently resides in Los Angeles, USA, where she is working on her modelling and acting career. She loves travelling and her favourite places so far are Hawaii and Thailand and she is crazy about trying their different local foods. "Travelling opens your mind and heart like nothing else does."

Her hidden passion is photography and videography and when she visits new places she loves to take pictures and film professionally. She doesn't just model, she is also the person behind the camera and she loves it the most! She likes meeting new people, learning languages and experiencing adrenaline adventures, so if you are a discoverer and a risktaker she is your kind of girl!

About me

Something most people don't know about me is that I'm an introvert. I love being around people, hanging out and living different experiences but I also need my alone time, that's a must.

Turn-ons

This might sound cliché but I love an interesting person with a great attitude and sense of humour towards life. Someone adventurous and with a positive energy. In terms of physical appearance, I love a tall strong guy with light eyes.

Turn-offs

I don't like guys who don't have goals and objectives, projects, motivation etc. I like someone strong, comprehensive and someone you I can be friends with, apart from being lovers. If you are rude or arguing all the time you won't have as many chances as an open-minded guy! I don't like f#ckboys or players, that's definitely a huge turn-off for me.

Girl crush

Margot Robbie and Megan Fox.

Want to see more of Laura? Then follow her journeys on Instagram @iamlauray





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YENITZA MUNOZ

A Mexican-American Journalist and Producer.

Photography by LUIS GOMEZ *Produced by* UNIVERSE 137 STUDIOS

Make-up by DES BARAJAS *Text by* SAMANTHA JACK

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Yenitza graduated from Loyola Marymount University in California, USA, with her Honours and started working for credited networks such as Telemundo, Fox, Time Warner, iHeart Radio, and NBC. Today she has a show called THE SOURCE TV which airs on KCAA NBC networks: 102.3 FM, 106.5 FM, and iHeart Radio. You can watch it on the Fullscreen network or on Youtube.

My hobbies and interests

Spending time with people I love. We have to enjoy our time with those who matter.

My goals and career ambitions

My ultimate career goal is to produce a variety of successful and internationally syndicated programs.

Who inspires me

There are many women who inspire me. From women in tech, to doctors, journalists, advocates and politicians. Ultimately, any female that has bettered the world or made someone feel better about themselves inspires me. We have the ability to be great and those who embody that inspire me.

Turn-on

A person with confidence.

Turn-off

The biggest turn off can is when someone assumes they are better than everyone. We are equal in my eyes.

The perfect date

My ideal date is with a man who is the ultimate gentleman. I feel that everyone should be treated with respect during a date.

My girl crush

Today there are a lot of successful women that are breaking barriers. There are too many to name, but within the entertainment industry I would say it's Sofia Vergara because she is a businesswoman, entertainer, producer, mother, wife, cancer survivor and a comedian. Like many women she does it all and can overcome a lot, like surviving breast cancer.

My favourite food

I love to travel so I have tried many different cuisines. Lately, I have been enjoying vegan Mexican food.

My biggest fear

We ultimately create our happiness and our fears. I always try to focus on what betters me, versus anything negative. We create our own reality.

One destination I'd love to visit

I grew up travelling with my parents. Now as an adult, I have inherited my family's travel bug. There is a list of places I want to go, but my top three are Israel, Japan and Australia.

I'm not embarrassed to say

That I make myself a to-do list every single day and I look at it constantly. What's funny is that I still never get most of it done.

For more of Yenitza's adventures you can follow her on Instagram @YenitzaMunoz, @The_Source_TV and on Facebook at Yenitza Munoz.



ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

Cruise through vineyards on a Ducati, ski an Alpine glacier and set sail in Sardinia on an Italian adventure that forgoes the standard-issue itinerary in favour of la dolce vita

Curated by LINDSAY SILBERMAN Text by ALEXANDRA KIRKMAN



“You may have the universe if I may have Italy,” Giuseppe Verdi, the prolific composer, once said, a trade-off that generations of Italophiles might concur is a pretty good deal. And while the splendours of cities like Rome, Venice and Florence can’t be overstated, there’s a deep inventory of lesser-travelled national treasures packed into this boot-shaped cradle of modern civilization that remain, at least to outsiders, relatively unsung—places where you’ll find more actual Italians than people holding guidebooks.

True to character, Italy’s most rarefied escapes offer something to fuel every passion. For momentum junkies, there’s skiing down the largest glacier in the Dolomites—a mesmerizing mountain range—or ripping through the Tuscan countryside on an all-terrain Ducati.

Those in search of off-the-grid privacy and wine—in that order—can find it on the windswept island of Pantelleria, while gourmets and autophiles will savour the distinct charms of Emilia-Romagna, home to Italy’s greatest gifts to the world: artisanal cuisine and supercars. The rugged beauty and mystical aquamarine waters of Sardinia’s east coast will rope in yachtsmen and explorers, and Lake Como—that sanctuary to the leisure classes that’s inspired writers and artists for centuries—will satisfy aesthetes looking for grand villas and even grander views. These are the hideouts of bella Italia that celebrate the art of living well, where you’ll come away understanding that *la dolce vita* is that much sweeter for the journey.

THE DOLOMITES

High adventure in the Italian Alps

If Italy represents the unrelenting opportunity to gorge oneself on pasta and negronis, well, that's just part of the magic. Nothing goes better with carbs than exhilaration, and the Dolomites, Europe's premier winter playground, have plenty to offer. Rising over 10,000 feet in the northern Italian Alps and bookended by Cortina d'Ampezzo to the east and Bolzano to the west, the world's largest ski resort—named a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2009—encompasses nearly 1200 kilometres of trails and impossibly gorgeous valleys. Once described as “the most beautiful natural architecture in the world” by French design master Le Corbusier, the mountains, which Italy annexed from Austria after World War I, have an ethereal quality, thanks to their vertical rock formations, verdant valleys blanketed with evergreens, and clouds that seem close enough to touch. A natural phenomenon called *enrosadira* (“becoming pink”) gives the outcrops an otherworldly glow—depending on the hour, their colour changes from bright yellow to fiery red to violet.

With a variety of terrain (only 10 per cent of its trails are expert level); the Dolomites accommodate every type of skier. For an all-out skiing safari, purchase the Dolomiti Superski lift pass, your seven-day ticket to its 450 chair lifts and 12 ski areas—or enlist the expertise of Dolomite Mountains, a luxury tour operator with an office in the U.S. The company's highly curated trips include multiday, off-piste ski expeditions from the top of Marmolada, the

region's highest peak, complete with helicopter transfer to the base. For those who prefer hairpin turns on asphalt, Drive Elements offers over-the-top Dolomites driving experiences like the “Dolomiti Hero,” where a 200-plus-mile course and 13 hair-raising passes put even the most intrepid motorists to the test. Choose the ultimate itinerary and you'll be picked up by helicopter at your arrival airport (Munich, Milan or Venice) and flown to a top-tier hotel to unwind in the best suite in the house. From there, the chopper transfers you to a mountain pass, where your supercar—a Bugatti Veyron, Lamborghini Huracán or Ferrari 458—waits. And you don't have to pick just one: The Drive Elements team will follow behind with the rest of the fleet, so you can switch out cars on the fly. Its photographers will capture the drive from the road and the air, and a film crew will shoot and produce your very own version of a James Bond film, with you in the starring role.

An extensive network of *rifugi*, or slope-side restaurants, means that Italy's gastronomic pleasures extend to the very top of the range. Nowhere is this more evident than in Alta Badia, a region comprising six villages in the southern part of the Val Badia valley that's considered the bona fide foodie paradise of the Dolomites. Every December, through its *Sciare con Gusto* (“taste of skiing”) program, a group of world-class chefs descends upon its 14 ski huts to compose a series of signature dishes, which are then served until April.

For an unforgettable taste of Alta Badia's culinary artistry, head straight to Hotel Ciasa Salares. Hidden away in the sleepy village



The aptly named Starlight Room—a rentable cabin that overlooks the Dolomites at 6,742 feet above sea level—is made of thermally insulated glass and is furnished with, of all things, a flat-screen television



Lago di Braies in the South Tyrol region of the Dolomites is known for its vibrant, emerald-green water

of San Cassiano and frequented by Italian VIPs—like former Ferrari chairman Luca Cordero di Montezemolo and Olympic ski champion Alberto Tomba—it's home to La Siriola, where Italy's youngest Michelin chef, 27-year-old Matteo Metullio, presides over the kitchen. (South Tyrol, the province in which Alta Badia is located, has more Michelin stars than any other Italian province.) Metullio offers five multicourse menus inspired by trees—"Fir," for example, includes dishes like hazelnut gnocchi with goat cheese sauce and quail breast, and pigeon with Jerusalem artichokes, cherries and nettles—or a 10-course tasting menu for the table; all of them include a visit to the restaurant's chocolate room, which features 40 varieties from around the globe and a fountain of olive oil-tempered Venezuelan chocolate.

La Siriola's wines—each personally selected by third-generation owner Stefan Wieser—come from the hotel's atmospheric, amber-lit wine cellar. Housing nearly 25,000 bottles and 1,850 different labels during the winter season, it's one of the largest cellars in the country, with an annual turnover of around 350 labels. You can host a dinner around its hand-hewn wooden tables for groups of up to 22, or try a wine and cheese tasting in the cheese room, where 50 to 70 selections will spoil you for choice. Upstairs, Wine Bar Siriola's elevated comfort food includes spaghettone cacio e pepe and an organic egg, bacon and asparagus salad with Parmigiano sauce and black truffle, while La Terrazza, the hotel's open-air restaurant, serves plates of crudo Montali (Italy's best prosciutto di Parma, according to Wieser) with fried potato bread and spinach ravioli in brown butter sauce, alongside wide-angle views of the surrounding valley.

Though the Dolomites beckon in winter for obvious reasons, their appeal in summer is steadily growing. The Dolomiti Supersummer pass offers access to some 100 lifts from June through early November, allowing intrepid climbers and hikers to explore hundreds of vie ferrate mountain routes, connected by suspended bridges and fixed ladders. First built by

Alpine guides at the end of the 19th century, they later came in handy for moving troops and supplies along the Italo-Austrian border during World War I. Down on terra firma, road and mountain bikers can choose from hundreds of kilometres of cycling routes at



A series of bridges, or vie ferrate, are installed throughout the Dolomites, enabling climbers to scale peaks with minimal equipment



varying altitudes. Alta Badia alone offers twice-daily road bike tours three times a week, as well as six electric-bike rental stations.

SARDINIA

Seafaring on a vintage sailing yacht

While Porto Cervo—the seaside bastion of privilege on the Costa Smeralda in northern Sardinia—guarantees prime parking for your super yacht, the island’s appeal extends far beyond its premier port. For a more earth-bound experience, head two hours south along the east coast to Cala Gonone. Virtually isolated from the rest of Sardinia until the late 19th century (a tunnel connecting the town to Dorgali to the west first opened in 1860), it’s the gateway to seriously spectacular beaches, with waters so blue and clear they seem photo shopped.

The quintessential Sardinian day at sea begins with chartering Dovesesto, an impeccably restored, 23-metre sailing yacht that departs daily from Cala Gonone’s port during summer. Originally built in 1941 in Varazze, a town known since the Middle Ages for

shipbuilding, the schooner’s current owners discovered it languishing in disrepair 16 years ago, and then spent a year painstakingly bringing it back to life. Dovesesto will take you and 11 guests along the Gulf of Orosei, cruising past limestone cliffs and caverns and stopping at a half-dozen unspoiled beaches accessible only by boat (and in some cases, a death-defying hike). You’ll explore the deep, luminescent waters of Grotta del Bue Marino, with stalactites, stalagmites and other wonders. And by day’s end, you’ll arrive at the awe-inspiring Cala Goloritzè, a UNESCO World Heritage site capped by the famous Aguglia di Goloritzè, a natural monument that soars nearly 500 feet into the sky. At Grotta della Contessa nearby, don’t be surprised if the crew reaches into the cavern’s rocky overhang and mysteriously produces a bottle of mirto—a Sardinian digestif—to toast the voyage.

The Dovesesto is also available for a longer jaunt northward to the La Maddalena archipelago, a five-day excursion for six guests that hits pristine ports like the island of Tavolara—a divers’ haven that also happens to be the smallest inhabited kingdom in the world, with 11 current residents—and Budelli, whose Spiaggia Rosa (“Pink Beach”) owes its blush to a microorganism that colours the sand.



From top: Charter to circumnavigate the scenic island of Sardinia; grottos along the beach frame the postcard-perfect seashore



Coral-hued sand on the south side of Budelli makes the unspoiled private island a natural wonder



PANTELLERIA

The Mediterranean's best-kept luxury secret

Known as “the black pearl of the Mediterranean” for its striking black-lava cliffs, the volcanic island of Pantelleria consistently draws Italian glitterati (Giorgio Armani has owned a villa here for nearly 40 years) looking for a respite far from the fanfare of perennial hot spots like Capri and Portofino. The largest of Sicily’s satellite islands, about 40 miles east of Tunisia, Pantelleria has an arid, windblown climate and a rich history—its long list of inhabitants includes the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans and Arabs, who began arriving thousands of years ago—that informs its calm and ancient charm.

This summer’s debut of Sikelia, Pantelleria’s first true luxury hotel, promises to lure a new influx of sophisticated travellers to the tony paradise. The 20-suite oasis, owned by financier-turned-winemaker Giulia Paziienza Gelmetti, is the result of a 10-year labour of love. Sikelia’s suites, each unique, are contrasts in lush velvet and linen,

framed by metal, concrete and glass, with vaulted ceilings that lend an airy ambience.

The resort comes to life at dusk, when guests gather in the palm-studded courtyard for cocktails and freshly fried polenta chips; on a clear evening, you can climb a few stairs to the roof and see Tunisia. At Sikelia’s restaurant, Themà—a joint venture with Milan’s celebrated Il Ristorante Trussardi Alla Scala—executive chef Roberto Conti melds Arabic and North African flavours with traditional Italian cuisine. It’s served alongside wine from Sikelia’s sister property, L’Officina di Coste Ghirlanda, a stone-terraced vineyard with an outdoor dining area illuminated by candlelight after dark.

Pantelleria’s zibibbo grapes—which grow nowhere else on earth—make the island a destination for oenophiles. Passito di Pantelleria, the area’s famous dessert wine, is on hand at the Pantelleria outpost of world-class Sicilian winemaker Donnafugata, where you can sample multiple vintages along with small plates like ravioli with fresh ricotta and mint.

From top: Pantelleria’s first proper luxury hotel, Sikelia, opened this summer; the 20-suite enclave was constructed from stone dwellings known as dammisi, which are native to the island



A day at sea exploring the island's craggy coastline is a requisite part of any Pantescan adventure: Procure some famous Sicilian arancini (baseball-size rice balls) and wine, and charter a gommone—an inflatable motorboat with a large sun bed and a captain—from La Tortuga at the main port. At sunset, head to the island's famous Lago di Venere, a heart-shaped natural lake known for its thermal springs and mineral-rich mud.

LAKE COMO

Italy's legendary lago

Long a haven for Versaces, Pirellis and other Italian royalty, along with high-profile men of the world like Sir Richard Branson and George Clooney, the 56-square-mile, wishbone-shape jewel—just an hour's drive from Milan—is one of Europe's most singularly captivating destinations. Here are our picks for the best places to stay, dine and imbibe on Lake Como.

Hotels

Villa d'Este

This lavish compound in the hamlet of Cernobbio has been the undisputed grande dame of Como since it opened in 1873, attracting a steady stream of luminaries and discerning travellers. Made up of two “palaces,” its 152 rooms—many with terraces and balconies offering unrivaled views of the lake—are furnished with antiques, paintings and brocade accents that recall the villa's 16th-century

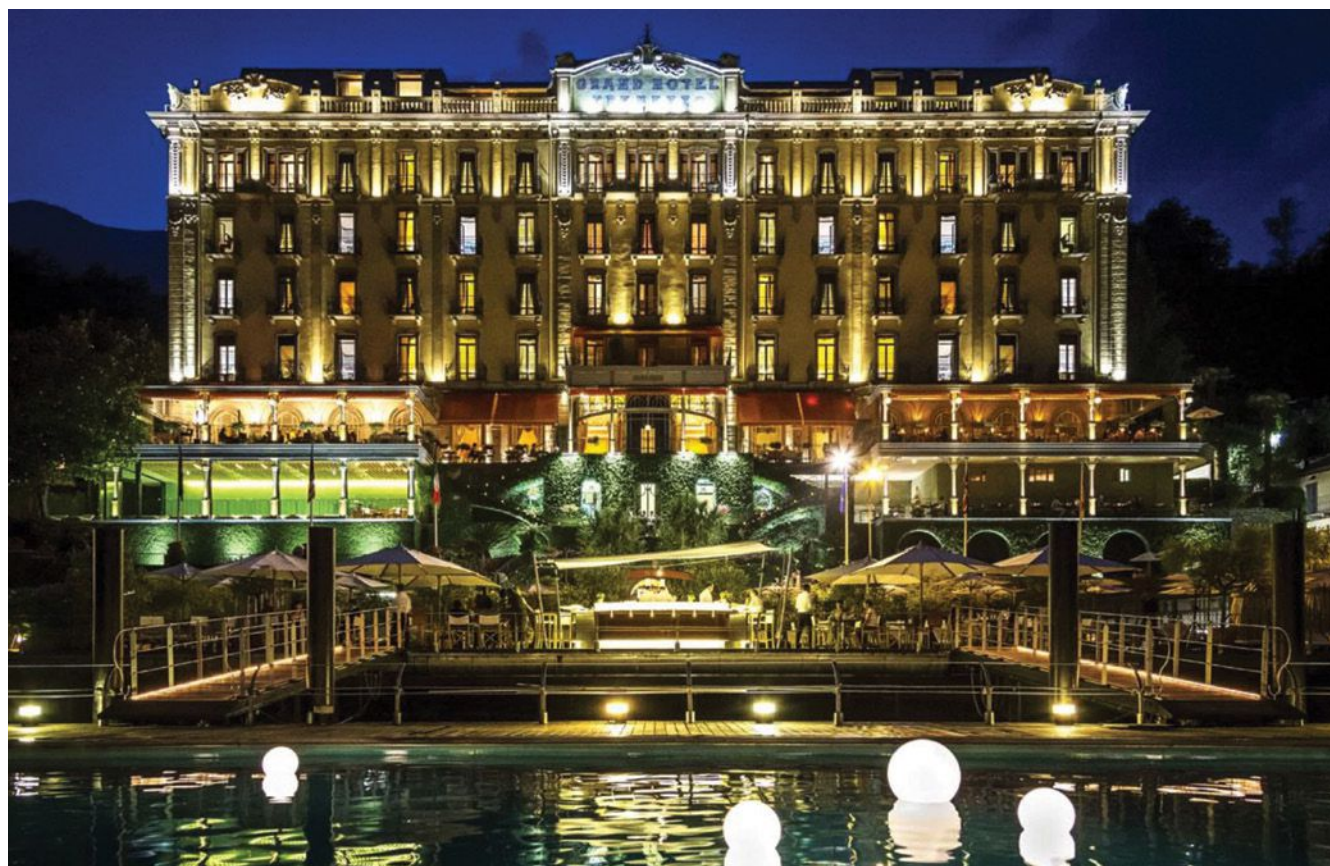
royal roots. For the regal treatment, book Villa Cima, the hotel's three-story, 650 square metre lakefront residence, built in 1814 by Caroline of Brunswick, who later became Queen of England.

Grand Hotel Tremezzo

In the 1932 film *Grand Hotel*, Greta Garbo called the Grand Hotel Tremezzo “that sunny, happy place,” and the glittering resort overlooking the heart of the lake still lives up to the compliment. Happiness can be found everywhere, from the floating pool, private beach club, clay tennis court and world-class spa (with indoor infinity pool) to the five acres of exquisitely manicured grounds. Art nouveau interiors and grand public spaces evoke the belle epoque, while rooftop suites, a recent addition, come with a private butler and big-sky views from an outdoor Jacuzzi.

Il Sereno Lago di Como

One of the most anticipated European hotel debuts of the year, the 30-suite sister property of Le Sereno in St. Barths opened its doors in August, bringing a contemporary aesthetic to the otherwise traditional locale. Designer Patricia Urquiola, whose former clients include Louis Vuitton and Cassina, was the visionary behind suites outfitted in stone, walnut and bronze, while the hotel's three boats were custom-designed by legendary local boat builder Cantiere Ernesto Riva. An 18 metre freshwater infinity pool suspended over the lake and two vertical gardens by French botanist Patrick Blanc accent the grounds.



On the western shore of Lake Como, the Grand Hotel Tremezzo looks even more regal at night. Opposite page: A view from the terrace of Villa d'Este, a 16th-century palace-turned-luxury hotel, photographed by David Drebin



Private Villas

Villa Pliniana

Built in 1573 and set on 18 waterfront acres, this spectacular palazzo consists of four separate villas, where Napoleon, Lord Byron and Percy Shelley all once laid their heads. Besides the massive ballrooms and waterfront gardens that can accommodate up to 500 people, the 19-bedroom villa also features a spa, private dock and on-site helipad. The owners of Il Sereno Lago di Como, about a half mile away, took over the villa's management earlier this year, so guests can expect world-class service, too.

Villa Sola Cabiati

The six-suite baroque-style villa, which dates back to the 1500s, once served as the summer residence of the distinguished Serbelloni dynasty. Today it's a living artefact, with antiques from the family's collection in every room. (And a few modern luxuries, like a helipad and cinema.) Serbelloni descendants still own the property, and they'll happily escort the curious to the family's private museum on the top two floors, where heirlooms and centuries-old pieces remain perfectly preserved.

Il Cigno Estate

Set amid seven acres of gardens at the end of a gated road, the sprawling estate comprises two villas, separated by a harbour, that can be booked individually or by the pair. Suites come outfitted in the finest Italian linens and overlook a huge private swimming pool, but Il Cigno's standout feature is unquestionably its woo burning fireplaces, which pair perfectly with bottles of vintage Barolo.

Restaurants

Il Gatto Nero

George Clooney is a regular at Il Gatto Nero, a casually elegant mainstay perched high on a hill in Cernobbio, where the views of the lake are as impressive as the cuisine. An acclaimed wine cellar and dishes like pasta with fish, raisins, pine nuts and bread crumbs, and veal tenderloin with foie gras and chestnut honey help cultivate a loyal and well-heeled clientele.

Silvio

Specializing in just-caught seafood since 1919, this fifth-generation family-owned restaurant and hotel is the star of Lake Como's quaint Bellagio village. Sit under Silvio's vine-covered pergola or at a table on the veranda—you can't go wrong with either—and order the catch of the day, prepared by the chefs in a Parmesan and truffle sauce.

The Market Place

Highly imaginative tasting menus and local ingredients make this upscale farm-to-table spot a can't-miss for epicureans. The dining room is intimate, with just 24 seats, and each dish—like the rabbit ravioli with chanterelles, or fish with zucchini carpaccio and scampi—is meticulously constructed.



Locanda La Tirlindana

If there's one thing Locanda La Tirlindana has mastered beyond its flawlessly tender calamari and mascarpone-filled ravioli, it's personalized service. The owner has been known to jump on her Vespa in search of lost customers, then usher them through narrow cobblestoned streets to the idyllic waterfront venue. The entrées are outstanding, and desserts, like red berry tiramisu, are even better.

Cocktails

Fresco Cocktail Shop

While Lake Como's nightlife is largely relegated to low-key soirées at private villas, this lively tavern is a popular option for after-dinner drinks. Bow-tied bartenders craft cocktails using fresh ingredients and are known for putting a unique spin on typical Italian libations. Try their take on a digestivo, a chocolate sangria with ruby port, fresh orange, sugar and white chocolate mousse.

I Tigli in Theoria

Built in 1013, this former bishop's palace turned Michelin-starred restaurant radiates character with a wooden coffered ceiling, candlelit courtyard and rotating art exhibitions. The upstairs lounge serves up a selection of drinks like the Spritz des Alpes, a spicier version of the Italian classic made with nutmeg and prosecco.

Above: I Tigli in Theoria. Opposite page: Lake Como's Villa del Balbianello, which dates back to the late 18th century, has appeared in a number of Hollywood films, including Casino Royale and Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones



EMILIA-ROMAGNA: *Artisanal cuisine & supercars*

Even in a country so rich in gastronomical gifts, the Emilia-Romagna region, bordered by the Po River to the north and the Apennine Mountains to the south, is without culinary peer, bringing more Denominazione di Origine Protetta (D.O.P.)—literally “Protected Designation of Origin”—foods to the global table than any other area of Europe. Only D.O.P. products can bear the word traditional on their labels, and the prized certification ensures that the region’s shortlist of 19 delicacies, which include Parmigiano-Reggiano, prosciutto di Parma and aceto balsamico di Modena—the world’s finest balsamic vinegar—are painstakingly crafted by farmers and artisans using centuries-old methods. Emilia-Romagna’s affinity for food is on display in 25 separate museums dedicated to the subject, which pay tribute to everything

from the art of Italian home cooking to the eels of Comacchio, a lagoon town in the province of Ferrara that claims the slithering creature can be prepared a thousand different ways.

To glean the flavour of both the D.O.P. production process and the region, take a tour of some of its top purveyors. At Antica Corte Pallavicina, a sprawling 14th-century estate in the Po Valley, sample the rare and coveted culatello di Zibello, a slowly cured boneless ham that purists contend makes prosciutto di Parma pale in comparison. (Its proprietor, Massimo Spigaroli, is widely regarded as Italy’s culatello king.) Take classes ranging from pasta making to pork production, dine at the Michelin-starred restaurant or stay over in one of the castle’s rustic rooms, featuring fireplaces and 16th-century panelled ceilings.

Right: The exterior view of Villa Sola Cabiani.





The Amalfi Drive

The legendary stretch of coastal road between the towns of Sorrento and Amalfi represents the harmony of nature and man. Technically known as SS163 Amalfitana and dating back to the Romans, it's a peerless driver's road, with twists and turns that cut through small villages, panoramic views of the Tyrrhenian Sea, precipitous drop-offs and impossible tunnels carved into sheer seaside cliffs. The combination of pristine beauty and gut-checking thrills provides a visceral boost of dopamine you just can't buy from a dealer.



For the best balsamic, visit Acetaia di Giorgio, considered the most esteemed house for the liquid gold in Modena, where the Barbieri family will guide you through the minimum 12-year fermentation process. For its exquisite sweetness, Giorgio's Primo Reserve Juniper D.O.P., aged more than 25 years in juniper barrels, is worth its R2 300 price tag. Hombre Organic Farm is the only local maker of organic Parmigiano-Reggiano on a closed-cycle property, meaning everything that goes into its production, including the corn and barley that feed Hombre's 500 Italian Friesian cows, comes from the premises. Call ahead to book a tour, on which you can observe artisans carefully crafting the cheese in giant copper cauldrons. A modest outbuilding also happens to house the world's most complete collection of Maseratis: Hombre's owner purchased the collection in

its entirety 20 years ago to ensure it remained in Modena, the car-maker's home since 1940.

A mecca for exotic car connoisseurs the world over, Emilia-Romagna's celebrated Motor Valley, encompassing the area from Bologna to Modena, is the birthplace of Maserati, Ducati, De Tomaso, Lamborghini, Stanguellini, Pagani and, of course, Ferrari. With 14 museums and 11 private collections devoted to high-octane titans, it feels like the mythical land of the car gods.

Ferrari is feted religiously here, with flags bearing its famous black horse flying far and wide. Founded in the Modena suburb of Maranello in 1947—where the original Ferrari museum remains—the prolific racing brand unveiled its latest showstopper, Museo Enzo Ferrari (MEF) in Modena, in 2012. The brainchild of founder Enzo Ferrari's

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MODENA



only living son, Piero, the museum is a futuristic engineering triumph on par with Ferrari's most seductive creations. MEF's gleaming white, pillar-less exhibition space was designed by the late visionary Czech architect Jan Kaplický and displays more than 20 cars; its double-curved aluminium roof—the first large-scale application of its kind—measures 35,500 square feet and is painted bright yellow, the official colour of both Ferrari and Modena. In addition to a range of Motor Valley-related exhibitions, MEF offers an F1 simulator that you can upgrade to “professional” mode for an even greater rush.

The factory and museum of Pagani, Italy's most secretive carmaker, founded by Argentinian Horacio Pagani in 1992 in San Cesario sul Panaro, is a high temple of automotive achievement. Here you'll get a first-hand look at the unparalleled craftsmanship and engineering

that bring handmade marvels like the Pagani Huayra BC to life. When the supercar debuted at this year's Geneva International Motor Show, the entire fleet—just 20 cars—had already sold for R36 million each.

You can get behind the wheel yourself with the Imola Faenza Tourism Company, which customizes experiences by request, including some spins around the track in a Ferrari 430 at the storied Imola racing circuit, former home of the Formula 1 San Marino Grand Prix, with two-time GT1 champion Thomas Biagi cheering you on from the passenger seat. Modenatur, another local tour provider, arranges test drives like the two-hour “precision tour” in a Ferrari or Lamborghini, where a professional driver will sharpen your skills in the rolling hills around Maranello as you channel Italian racing legends and relish *la grande bellezza* of it all.



TAYA

A vivacious bombshell with a wild streak and a love for the outdoors and adventure, this American stunner is in it to win it.

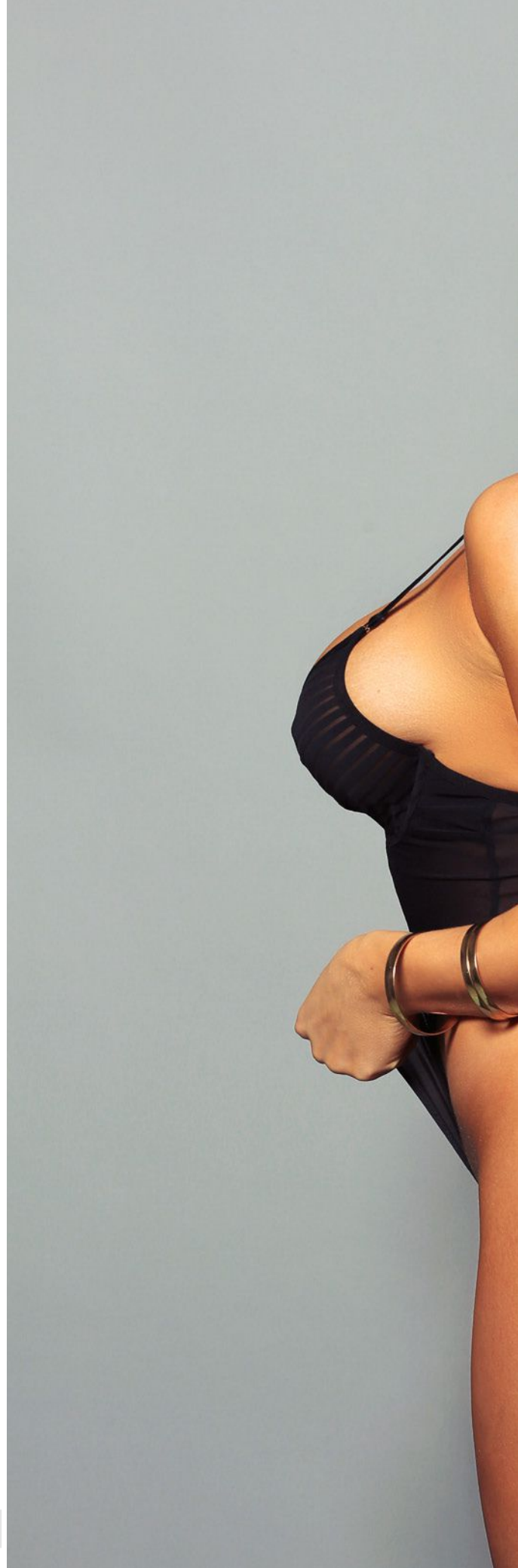
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Text by SAMANTHA JACK

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A US Washington DC native, Taya currently resides in Seattle where she loves cheering on Seattle sports teams, especially the Seattle Seahawks. Taya is a curvaceous brunette with a confident walk that demands your attention. She draws every eye with her curvy measurements and hips. Irish and Native American heritage make for a fiery combination; she's a wild thing!

She loves to travel and feels at home in the great outdoors. Taya seeks out hikes and outdoor activities in each country and state that she visits. Her favourite trip to date was to Havana in Cuba for its intoxicating beauty and amazing people. "I believe visiting foreign countries and experiencing other cultures first-hand is important for growth and perspective. It has changed the way I see life and my values."

About me

I'm a huge animal lover, especially dogs, so if you have one I'd love to take on the role of step-mama! I'm an active person by nature, but I can also enjoy a movie night with wine and cuddles. It's all about who you're with and finding a good balance of activity and downtime.

Turn-ons

I love a man who is still a kid at heart, who finds humour in everything and still enjoys the small things in life. That's a big turn-on! A man who is truly a strong leader does not mistreat others. One of the sexiest things I've ever seen was a man whose presence alone demanded respect. People followed his lead not out of fear or force, but out of a deeper admiration and respect. I love a genuinely good-hearted man. I'm always up for adventure and spontaneity. A man who can keep up with my high energy is such a turn-on! I have an insatiable hunger for new experiences and raw adventure. I'm a thrill seeker and I believe in trying everything once. Well, almost everything.

Turn-offs

I get really turned off by men who are full of themselves. There's a big difference between confident and egotistical. Negativity is another big turn-off. I quickly separate myself from men who are pessimistic and fail to see that happiness is a choice. Life is not happening to us, it is responding to us! We create our own lives and I choose to create a happy one.

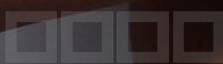
Girl crush

Adriana Lima, Tammy Hembrow and Selena Gomez.

For more of Taya's adventures you can follow her on Instagram @_tayarose_



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